

A GLASS OF DISTINCTION

This One Figured at Christening
Dinner of George Wash-
ington.

HIS PRETTY GODMOTHER

Was Only Thirty-six, But Twice
a Widow When She Stood
for George.

At the centennial celebration, in Boston, of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, Gen. L. H. Warren, of Philadelphia, introduced as a loving cup a wine glass once owned by Mrs. Mildred Washington Gregory, the aunt and godmother of George Washington.

It was afterward used by the hero himself at the Peace Ball, given in Fredericksburg immediately after the surrender at Yorktown, and now figures at the annual Fourth of July dinner at the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati, when the president drinks from it to the toast: "To the Memory of Washington."

The relic is stamped with the Washington coat of arms and was brought to America in 1857 by Col. John Washington, the great-grandfather of the General. It appears at the society through the courtesy of Dr. William S. Forbes, professor of anatomy at Jefferson College, Philadelphia, to whom it has descended through five generations from its ancestress, Mrs. Mildred Washington Gregory.

Its duplicate was inherited by his brother, Mr. David Forbes, of Fredericksburg, but in the days of death following the Civil War was sold by him for \$100 to the late Mrs. J. S. Lenox, of New York, and is now in the museum of the Lenox Home, established by him in that city. Mr. Forbes owned another glass, however, from which the baby George's health was drunk at his christening dinner, and his godmother's christening glass, and a part of one of her tea sets, a quilt three-cornered chair in which she sat; several fine Loeftoff bowls, with cut-glass candelabra and silver candlesticks, and snuff more than 20 years old. He has also unpublished letters from Washington and the commission of Francis Thornton—a son-in-law of Mrs. Gregory—as "lieutenant-colonel of his Majesty's militia in Spotsylvania county," signed by Governor Gooch, of Virginia, for whom Gooch-county was named, and having upon it two of the stamps (worth 15 shillings each) which brought on the American Revolution. In his collection, too, are miniatures of a number of Mildred's descendants; and, while her own is considered by the family as the most precious in approaching generations bring us so near to her as to warrant the assumption of some resemblance. It is, indeed, with such aids as these, together with a few disjointed traditions, that we must piece out the picture of the person who played an important role apart from that in which she briefly appears in history. Although only 36 years old when she stood sponsor for Washington, she was a widow for the second time, and possessed of the combined fortunes of two wealthy Virginia planters. Her marriage with the first of these, Mr. Henry Lewis, was childless and no account of the connection exists, but the strength of the tie is inferred from the fact that she was his second wife, and a son for him.

A THIRD FEATURE.

Of the Gregory union there were three daughters—Frances, Elizabeth and Mildred, who married three brothers—Francis, Reuben and John Thornton. Frances Gregory and Francis Thornton were the progenitors of Mr. Francis Forbes, Dr. Thornton Forbes, and Mr. David Forbes; to Mildred and John were born nine daughters, all of whom married men of wealth and position; while from the three daughters of Gregory alliances have sprung hosts of descendants, scattered throughout the Union.

At the time of Washington's christening his godmother was on the eve of what his father called in his will "a third venture." Col. Harry Willis, the first Mayor of Fredericksburg, described by Colonel Byrd, of Westover, as "the top man of the place," had married her cousin, and at her death Mrs. Gregory was found bawling in tears. "Were you so fond of Mrs. Willis?" was asked.

"Oh, no," sobbed the widow. "I'm not crying for that; but I just know Harry Willis is coming after me." Her words were prophetic. In due time the Colonel laid violent siege to her heart, finally assailing himself we must presume, and declaring his intention of remaining until the coveted promise was obtained. That she yielded is scarcely to be wondered at, the tradition being that "she married Harry Willis to get rid of him."

Reverent descendants have criticized her premature distress as unbecoming in a widow, but a manuscript account of the Colonel, written by his grandson and owned by Mr. Robert Knox, of Fredericksburg, explains her fears.

"My granfather," says the writer, "who had three wives, addressed them all as maids and married them as widows. He was a blunt man, and more likely to succeed with the latter than the former."

Colonel and Mrs. Willis went to live at Willis Hill, now the National Cemetery, and on the site of the house—afterward destroyed by fire—and in the lawn and garden through which Washington's godmother wandered, are buried the Union dead who fell in the battles around Fredericksburg.

The eldest child of their marriage, Lewis

Willis—named for Mrs. Willis' first husband—was just two years younger than Washington. The cousins were school mates and intimate friends, and it was Lewis Willis' testimony to his studiousness which Paul Leicester Ford attributes to "young Lewis" in his "True George Washington."

"At recess," he says, "while we played at bandy and other games, George stood behind the schoolroom door eavesdropping."

The second son was called for Colonel Byrd, of Westover, a string of rhymes, with which the children of that generation were familiar, beginning:

As I was going up Willis' Hill
I met a Byrd without a bill.

Colonel Willis seems to have been a most public-spirited citizen, and traces of him—in his benediction to the town—may still be seen in Fredericksburg. He gave the land upon which the present courthouse stands, and that, too, upon which old St. George's Church was built. His first rector, Rev. James Mayne, established the academy which Washington attended and at which Madison and Monroe were afterward prepared for college.

Mary Washington was a member of his flock, and on a certain Sunday, when her laurel-crowned son, on one of his hurried visits, went with her to morning service, such throngs gathered to see him that the gallery threatened to give way, when the saucer-stricken crowd leaped from the windows and trampled upon each other in their effort to escape. Around the present building—the third erected upon the same site, its predecessors having been pulled down to make the requirements of a growing congregation—interesting graves cluster, the most noteworthy being that of a brother of Paul Jones, the founder of the American navy, and of Col. John Dandridge, the father-in-law of Washington, whose death occurred suddenly while attending the Fredericksburg races.

BURNED HIS VIOLIN.

Objects of interest pointed out within the building and recalling a pathetic story are an oil painting in the vestry room of Rev. Edward McGuire (for 45 years rector of the church) and a memorial window to him in the rear of the church.

At the time of his taking charge of the parish there was living on Main street, in Fredericksburg, the widow of Samuel Washington, the General's next youngest brother, who died before her marriage.

Dolly Thornton, the daughter of Francis Thornton and the granddaughter of Mrs. Mildred Washington Gregory. To this lady Mrs. McGuire came seeking board;

and when she hesitated her aged mother (formerly Ann Thompson, a daughter of Lady Spotswood by her second marriage with Rev. John Thompson) threw her influence upon the side of the stranger, saying:

"Take the man of God into thy house, Dolly. He will bring a blessing upon it."

He was duly installed accordingly, and soon afterward the ladies heard at noon each day the strains of a violin issued from his room. They referred to it, when, with a strange sadness in his manner, the young man said:

"It is an instrument of which I am very fond; and I play upon it in my hour of recreation."

The next day and the next they missed the charming recital, and, a week going by, Mrs. Thornton ventured to ask what had become of the beautiful instrument.

"Alas, madam," replied the young clergyman, "I was too fond of it. I have buried my violin in the garden."

Fredericksburg seems to have been a nucleus around which the Washington clan gathered. In addition to the numerous Ball connection the Gregory girls (who reigned as belles in the town, bringing many swains from distant parts to the Rising Sun Hotel) settled, after their marriages with the three Thornton brothers, in its vicinity. Beautiful Kenmore was

presided over by Mrs. Fiddling Lewis, the hero's only sister; his godmother, with the children of her third marriage, lived at Willis' Hill, and his mother in the modest house on Charles street. There was much to explain the frequent visits of which we read. On one of them, which cannot be chronologically placed, the furniture was removed from the spacious bedroom which Mary Washington occupied. Its floors were waxed, and a gay company chased back and forth to the music of a violin played by a negro fiddler. Washington led the dance, whispering to his partner as he took her out: "I didn't know that I had such a pretty dark-eyed cousin."

LIVED LONG TIME.

The pretty cousin lived more than a decade beyond the Scriptural limit, and the compliment was treasured long after the voice which uttered it was silent. The old lady was fond of repeating it, saying in conclusion, with a gesture toward her time-dimmed eyes, "And they are bright now."

In illustration of the theory that human nature seeks its complement rather than its affinity, Washington's mother and godmother were devoted friends. They took long drives together, the former returning with a stately bow and the latter with a familiar nod and the salutations which greeted them as they passed along the streets of Fredericksburg.

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GILBERTA WHITTE.

Harris—Harris.

The Church of Corinth, Powhatan county, Va., was a scene of a very pretty marriage Thursday, February 18th, at 4 P. M., when Mr. John E. Harris led to the altar Miss Cornelia Turner Harris.

Rev. Robert Winfree officiating. The wedding march was beautifully rendered by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The ushers were Messrs. John W. Harris, Andrew A. Porter, R. H. Hancock, Nelson Cosby, of Powhatan; Thomas B. Watkins and B. A. Martin, of Richmond.

The bridegroom was a native of Powhatan, and the bride a native of Richmond.

The ceremony was performed at 4 P. M., and the wedding reception was held at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Harris, of Powhatan.

The wedding feast was served at 7 P. M., and the dancing continued until midnight.

The bride and groom left for their new home at 11 P. M.

The wedding party consisted of 20 persons.

The wedding cake was served at 10 P. M.

The wedding dress was made by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding veil was made by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding shoes were made by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding gloves were made by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding stockings were made by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding hair was styled by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding make-up was done by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding perfume was used by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding jewelry was worn by Miss Lulu Bradshaw, of Powhatan.

The wedding ring was given by Mr. John E. Harris.

The wedding kiss was given by Mr. John E. Harris.

The wedding prayer was said by Rev. Robert Winfree.

The wedding benediction was given by Rev. Robert Winfree.

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